Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 SS-15 STR-04 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 FEA-01 DOTE-00 /094 W

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R 080628Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1061
INFO AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL SYDNEY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMCONSUL BRISBANE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 5551

USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A

AMCONSUL PERTH

TAGS: EALR, ECON, ELAB, AS

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN UNEMPLOYMENT IN JULY

REF: (A) CANBERRA 5223, (B) CANBERRA 5066 (NOTAL), (C) CANBERRA 4047

1. DATA RELEASED OVER THE WEEKEND SHOWED THAT UNEMPLOYMENT AT THE END OF JULY WAS UP BY 4,598 COMPARED TO END JUNE FIGURES, OR 5.44 PERCENT OF ESTIMATED WORK FORCE OF 6.2 MILLION. RISE MAY BE COMPARED WITH RISE OF 5,035 IN JULY 1976 AND 5,647, IN JULY 1975. SCHOOL LEAVERS DECREASED BY 2,862 COMPARED WITH FALLS OF 1,844 AND 1,924 DURING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAME MONTH IN TWO PRECEDING YEARS.

2. UNFILLED VACANCIES ALSO DECLINED DURING JULY, RESULTING IN A RATIO OF 17.7 UNEMPLOYED FOR EVERY UNFILLED VACANCY, COMPARED TO 12.2 IN JULY 1976 AND 17.4 IN JUNE AND 16.1 IN MAY.

- 3. JUNE STATISTICS FOR SEASONALLY ADJUSTED OVER-TIME WHICH WERE ALSO RELEASED SHOW SLIGHT INCREASE FO 2.46 HOURS PER WEEK COMPARED TO 2.29 HOURS IN MAY AND 2.31 HOURS IN APRIL.
- 4. PRESS RELEASE BY MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS STREET INDICATED THE OBVIOUS THAT: "THERE WAS NO CLEARLY EVIDENT TREND IN LABOR MARKET DURING JULY.1 IN A STATEMENT CLEARLY AIMED AT THE CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION COMMISSION, WHICH IS IN THE MIDST OF HEARINGS TO DETERMINE THE NATIONAL WAGE AWARD AS A RESULT OF THE RECENTLY RELEASED CPI FOR THE JUNE QUARTER (REFTEL A), STREET TOLD A MELBOURNE PRESS CONFERENCE THAT EMPLOYMENT IS DOWN BECAUSE EMPLOYERS ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY IN ADJUSTING TO THE IMPACT OF QUARTERLY WAGE RISES AND THAT THE \$A9.50 INCREASES FROM THE LAST TWO WAGE DECISIONS HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO ABSORB.
- 5. FORMER ALP TREASURER HAYDEN STATED THAT UNEMPLOYMENT WOULD EVENTUALLY REACH 7.0 PERCENT AND CALLED FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ALLEVIATE THE INTENSE PAINFUL EFFECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE BREAKDOWN OF BUSINESS. HE CALLED FOR RETRAINING AND RELOCATION SCHEMES AND OTHER GOVERNMENT CAPITAL SPENDING WHICH MUST BE "CAREFULLY SELECTED" AND "CAREFULLY REGULATED" TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AVOID AGGREVATING INFLATION.

6. COMMENT: THERE HAVE BEEN PERSISTENT RECENT PRESS REPORTS THAT STREET AND HIS MINISTRY HAVE PUT SEVERAL POSSIBLE SCHEMES TO CABINET, BUT THAT SO FAR CABINET HAS REFUSED TO CONSIDER ALL OR MOST OF THEM. NEVERTHELESS, PRESSURE FOR SOME SORT OF ACTION PROGRAM WILL CERTAINLY INCREASE AND AUGUST BUDGET SUBMISSION MAY WELL CONTAIN SOME NEW PROGRAMS, AT LEAST FOR THEIR COSMETIC EFFECT. ALSTON

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